

The UDC shall ask the inmate to indicate a choice of staff representative, if any, and the names of any witnesses the inmate wishes to be called to testify at the hearing and what testimony they are expected to provide. The UDC shall advise the inmate that the inmate may waive the right to be present at the Institution Discipline hearing, but still elect to have witnesses and/or a staff representative appear in the inmate's behalf at this hearing.

(j) When the Unit Discipline Committee holds a full hearing and determines that the inmate did not commit a prohibited act of High, Moderate or Low Moderate Severity, the UDC shall expunge the inmate's file of the Incident Report and related documents. The UDC must refer to the Discipline Hearing Officer all incidents involving prohibited acts of Greatest Severity.

(k) The UDC may extend time limits imposed in this section for a good cause shown by the inmate or staff and documented in the record of the hearing.

**§ 541.16 Establishment and functioning of the Discipline Hearing Officer.**

(a) Each Bureau of Prison institution shall have an independent hearing officer (DHO) assigned to conduct administrative fact-finding hearings covering alleged acts of misconduct and violations of prohibited acts, including those acts which could result in criminal charges. In the event of a serious disturbance or other emergency, or if an inmate commits an offense in the presence of the DHO, an alternate Discipline Hearing Officer will be appointed to conduct hearings with approval of the appropriate Regional Director. If the institution's DHO is not able to conduct hearings, the Warden shall arrange for another DHO to conduct the hearings. This person must be trained and certified as a DHO, and meet the other requirements for DHO.

(b) In order to insure impartiality, the DHO may not be the reporting officer, investigating officer, or UDC member, or a witness to the incident or play any significant part in having the charge(s) referred to the DHO.

(c) The Discipline Hearing Officer shall conduct hearings, make findings,

and impose appropriate sanctions for incidents of inmate misconduct referred for disposition following the hearing required by § 541.15 before the UDC. The DHO may not hear any case or impose any sanctions in a case not heard and referred by the UDC. Only the Discipline Hearing Officer shall have the authority to impose or suspend sanctions A through F.

(d) The Warden at each institution shall designate a staff member, hereinafter called the Segregation Review Official (SRO), to conduct reviews of inmates placed in disciplinary segregation and administrative detention in accordance with the requirements of § 541.20 and § 541.22.

**§ 541.17 Procedures before the Discipline Hearing Officer.**

The Discipline Hearing Officer shall proceed as follows:

(a) The Warden shall give an inmate advance written notice of the charge(s) against the inmate no less than 24 hours before the inmate's appearance before the Discipline Hearing Officer unless the inmate is to be released from custody within that time. An inmate may waive in writing the 24-hour notice requirement.

(b) The Warden shall provide an inmate the service of a full time staff member to represent the inmate at the hearing before the Discipline Hearing Officer should the inmate so desire. The Warden, the DHO or alternate DHO, the reporting officer, investigating officer, a witness to the incident, and UDC members involved in the case may not act as staff representative. The Warden may exclude staff from acting as staff representative in a particular case when there is a potential conflict in roles. The staff representative shall be available to assist the inmate if the inmate desires by speaking to witnesses and by presenting favorable evidence to the DHO on the merits of the charge(s) or in extenuation or mitigation of the charge(s). The DHO shall arrange for the presence of the staff representative selected by the inmate. If the staff member selected declines or is unavailable because of absence from the institution, the inmate has the option of selecting another representative, or in

the case of an absent staff member of waiting a reasonable period for the staff member's return, or of proceeding without a staff representative. When several staff members decline this role, the Warden shall promptly appoint a staff representative to assist the inmate. The DHO shall afford a staff representative adequate time to speak with the inmate and interview requested witnesses where appropriate. While it is expected that a staff member will have had ample time to prepare prior to the hearing, delays in the hearing to allow for adequate preparation may be ordered by the Discipline Hearing Officer. When it appears that the inmate is not able to properly make a presentation on his own behalf (for example, an illiterate inmate), the Warden shall appoint a staff representative for the inmate, even if one is not requested.

(c) The inmate is entitled to make a statement and to present documentary evidence in the inmate's own behalf. An inmate has the right to submit names of requested witnesses and have them called to testify and to present documents in the inmate's behalf, provided the calling of witnesses or the disclosure of documentary evidence does not jeopardize or threaten institutional or an individual's security. The DHO shall call those witnesses who have information directly relevant to the charge(s) and who are reasonably available. This may include witnesses from outside of the institution. The inmate charged may be excluded during the appearance of an outside witness. The appearance of the outside witness should be in an area of the institution in which outside visitors are usually allowed. The DHO need not call repetitive witnesses. The reporting officer and other adverse witnesses need not be called if their knowledge of the incident is adequately summarized in the Incident Report and other investigative materials supplied to the DHO. The DHO shall request submission of written statements from unavailable witnesses who have information directly relevant to the charge(s). The DHO shall document reasons for declining to call requested witnesses in the DHO report, or, if the reasons are confidential, in a separate report, not

available to the inmate. The inmate's staff representative, or when the inmate waives staff representation, the DHO, shall question witnesses requested by the inmate who are called before the DHO. The inmate who has waived staff representation may submit questions for requested witnesses in writing to the DHO. The inmate may not question any witness at the hearing.

(d) An inmate has the right to be present throughout the DHO hearing except during a period of deliberation or when institutional security would be jeopardized. The DHO must document in the record the reason(s) for excluding an inmate from the hearing. An inmate may waive the right to be present at the hearing, provided that the waiver is documented by staff and reviewed by the DHO. A waiver may be in writing, signed by the inmate, or if the inmate refuses to sign a waiver, it shall be shown by a memorandum signed by staff and witnessed by a second staff member indicating the inmate's refusal to appear at the hearing. The DHO may conduct a hearing in the absence of an inmate when the inmate waives the right to appear. When an inmate escapes or is otherwise absent from custody, the Discipline Hearing Officer shall conduct a hearing in the inmate's absence at the institution in which the inmate was last confined. When an inmate returns to custody following absence during which sanctions were imposed by the DHO (or the predecessor Institution Discipline Committee (IDC)), the Warden shall have the charges reheard before the Discipline Hearing Officer ordinarily within 60 days after the inmate's arrival at the institution to which the inmate is designated after return to custody, and following appearance before the Unit Discipline Committee at that institution. The UDC shall ensure that the inmate has all rights required for appearance before the Discipline Hearing Officer, including delivery of charge(s), advisement of the right to remain silent and other rights to be exercised before the Discipline Hearing Officer. All the applicable procedural requirements for hearings before the Discipline Hearing Officer apply to this rehearing, except that written statements of witnesses

not readily available may be liberally used instead of in-person witnesses. The DHO upon rehearing may affirm the earlier action taken, may dismiss the charge(s), may modify the finding of the original DHO as to the offense which was committed, or may modify but may not increase the sanctions previously imposed in the inmate's absence.

(e) The DHO may refer the case back to the UDC for further information or disposition. The DHO may postpone or, at any time prior to making a decision as to whether or not a prohibited act was committed, may continue the hearing until a later date whenever further investigation or more evidence is needed. A postponement or continuance must be for good cause (determined by the DHO) shown by the inmate or staff and should be documented in the record of the hearing.

(f) The DHO shall consider all evidence presented at the hearing. The decision of the DHO shall be based on at least some facts, and if there is conflicting evidence, it must be based on the greater weight of the evidence. The DHO shall find that the inmate either:

(1) Committed the prohibited act charged and/or a similar prohibited act if reflected in the Incident Report; or

(2) Did not commit the prohibited act charged or a similar prohibited act if reflected in the Incident Report.

When a disciplinary decision is based on confidential informant information, the UDC or DHO shall document, ordinarily in the hearing report, the finding as to the reliability of each confidential informant relied on *and the factual basis for that finding*. When it appears that this documentation in the report would reveal the confidential informant's identity, the finding as to the reliability of each confidential informant relied on and the factual basis for that finding shall be made part of the hearing record in a separate report, prepared by the UDC chairman or DHO, not available to the inmate.

(g) The Discipline Hearing Officer shall prepare a record of the proceedings which need not be verbatim. This record must be sufficient to document the advisement of inmate rights, the DHO's findings, the DHO's decision and the specific evidence relied on by

the DHO, and must include a brief statement of the reasons for the sanctions imposed. The evidence relied upon, the decision, and the reasons for the actions taken must be set out in specific terms unless doing so would jeopardize institutional security. The DHO shall give the inmate a written copy of the decisions and disposition, ordinarily within 10 days of the DHO's decision.

(h) A record of the hearing and supporting documents are to be kept in the inmate central file.

(i) The Discipline Hearing Officer shall expunge an inmate's file of the Incident Report and related documents following a DHO finding that the inmate did not commit a prohibited act. The requirement for expunging the inmate's file does not preclude maintaining for research purposes copies of disciplinary actions resulting in "not guilty" findings in a master file separate from the inmate's institution file. However, institution staff may not use or allow the use of the contents of this master file in a manner which would adversely affect the inmate. Likewise, the expungement requirement does not require the destruction of medical reports or other reports relating to a particular inmate which must be maintained to document medical or other treatment given in a special housing unit. If an inmate's conduct during one continuous incident may constitute more than one prohibited act, and if the incident is reported in a single Incident Report, and if the DHO finds the inmate has not committed every prohibited act charged, or if the DHO finds that the inmate has committed a prohibited act(s) other than the act(s) charged, then the DHO shall record those findings clearly and shall change the Incident Report to show only the incident and code references to charges which were proved. Institution staff may not use the existence of charged but unproved misconduct against the inmate.

#### **§ 541.18 Dispositions of the Discipline Hearing Officer.**

The Discipline Hearing Officer has available a broad range of sanctions and dispositions following completion